disbursement of claims to the eligible units and seek reimbursement from the Central Government.

**ISMA Demand for increase in Levy Price of Sugar**

2451. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to increase the levy sugar price on demand of Indian Sugar Mills Association;

(b) if so, the proposed levy price and the impact this price increase will have on the interest of farmers as well as the market policy of sugar industry; and

(c) whether the said Association has also demanded to decontrol the sugar price; and if so, Government's reaction to this demand?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The Indian Sugar Mills Association, in their submissions of 20.11.1996, have petitioned the Government to increase the issue price of levy sugar to Rs. 11.30 per Kg. The matter is under consideration of the Government.

(c) The Assoication has demanded decontrol of sugar pricing. It is the current policy of partial control with a dual pricing machanism which has stood the test of time.

**Missing of Blank import licences**

2452. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that blank import licences are missing from the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT);

(b) if so, the extent of loss and the periods of loss of these blank import licences;

(c) whether it is a fact that these licences were used to siphon the money abroad; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) Loss of 3,121 Blank Import Licences has been reported from various regional offices of the Directorate General Foreign Trade (DGFT) which have come to their notice during the years 1992 to 1995.

(c) and (d) Investigations caused by Enforcement Directorate, have revealed that certain persons/firms have, during the period 1991—96 been resorting to getting remittances abroad effected against fake/missing import licences. Amount suspectedly involved, in contravention of FERA, 1973, in such transactions, as could be ascertained from investigations made, so far, is to the tune of Rs. 129 crores approximately in respect of both fake and missing import licences. On detection of the loss, prompt steps were taken by concerned offices of the Directorate General Foreign Trade to render he missing licences in-operative. One person has so far been arrested under the provisions of FERA.

**Setting up of vocational rehabilitation centres for handicapped persons in Bihar**

2453. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to establish vocational rehabilitation, Centres for the handicapped persons in the State of Bihar for their Welfare;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to provide gainful employment to handicapped persons in Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) to (b) The required information as supplied by Ministry of Labour is given in the enclosed statement. (*see* below).

(c) Statement showing the steps taken to provide gainful employment to handicapped persons in the country including Bihar is given in the Statement.

**Statement-I**

*Setting up of vocational rehabilitation centres for handicapped persons in Bihar*

A Vocational rehabilitation Centre for Handicapped (VRC) has already been functioning at Patna. The last three years performance of this Centre is as follows:—

| | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intake | 684 | 821 | 755 |
| Evaluated | 687 | 763 | 410 |
| Rehabilitated | 82 | 85 | 79 |

There is no proposal to set up a second VRC at present in Bihar.

**Statement-II**

*Setting up of Vocational Rehabilitation Centres for Handicapped persons in Bihar*

(i) In terms of Section 33 of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, every appropriate Government shall appoint in every establishment such per centage of vacancies not less than three percent for persons of class of persons with disability of which one per cent each shall be reserved for persons suffering from—(i) blindness of low vision; (ii) hearing impairment; (iii) locomotor disability or cerebral palsy, in the posts identified for each disability. Even before the Act came into force, 3 per cent vacancies have been reserved for physically handicapped, 1 per cent each for the physical, hearing and orthopaedically handicapped in Group C & D posts in Central Government and Public Sector Undertakings. Similar reservations have been given by some State Govts. Apart from this, age concession and relaxation in medical standards are also available to handicapped candidates.

(ii) 41 Special Employment Exchanges and 47 Special Cells for the handicapped persons have been set up exclusively to help the handicapped in getting gainful employment. Besides, the Normal Employment Exchange also help the handicapped person in finding suitable employment.

(iii) Seventeen Vocational Rehabilitation Centres have been set up to assess the residual ability of the disabled, arrange their training and place them in employment.

(iv) Self-employment is promoted through the following:—

(a) Allotment of vending stalls, kiosks and petty shops;

(b) Loans from Nationalised Banks at nominal rates of interest under differential Rate of Interest Scheme;

(c) Allotment of public telephone booths;

(d) Reservation in distribution of petrol pumps, kerosene depots etc.

**Proposal to set up a National Sugar Pricing Board**

2454. SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to refer to his observations made at the Economic Ministers' Conference held on 6th November, 1996 and state:

(a) whether Government are considering any proposal to set up a National Sugar Pricing Board to iron out anomalies between the Centre and State prices offered for sugarcane;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when legislation is likely to be brought forward to give effect to this?